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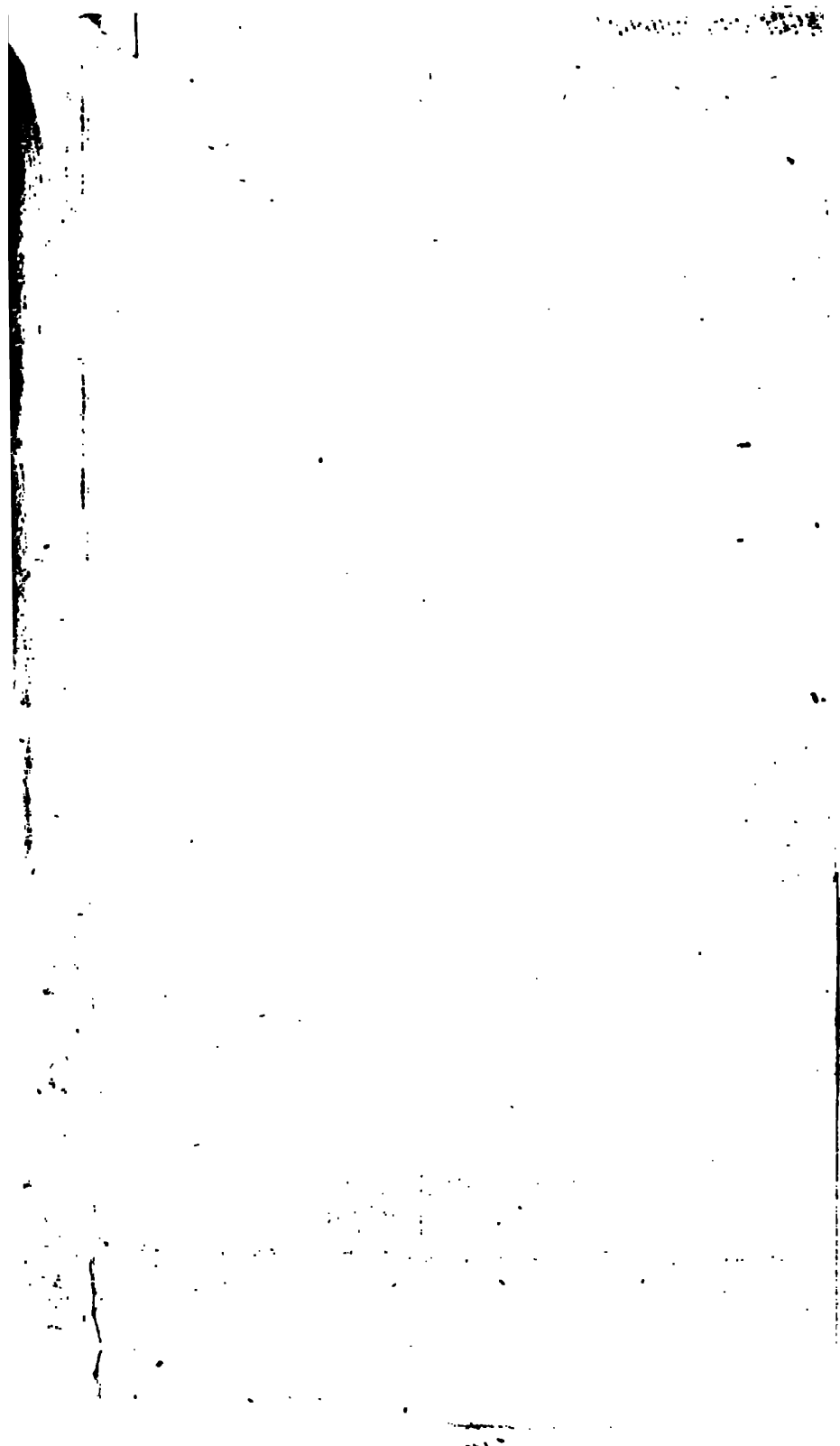
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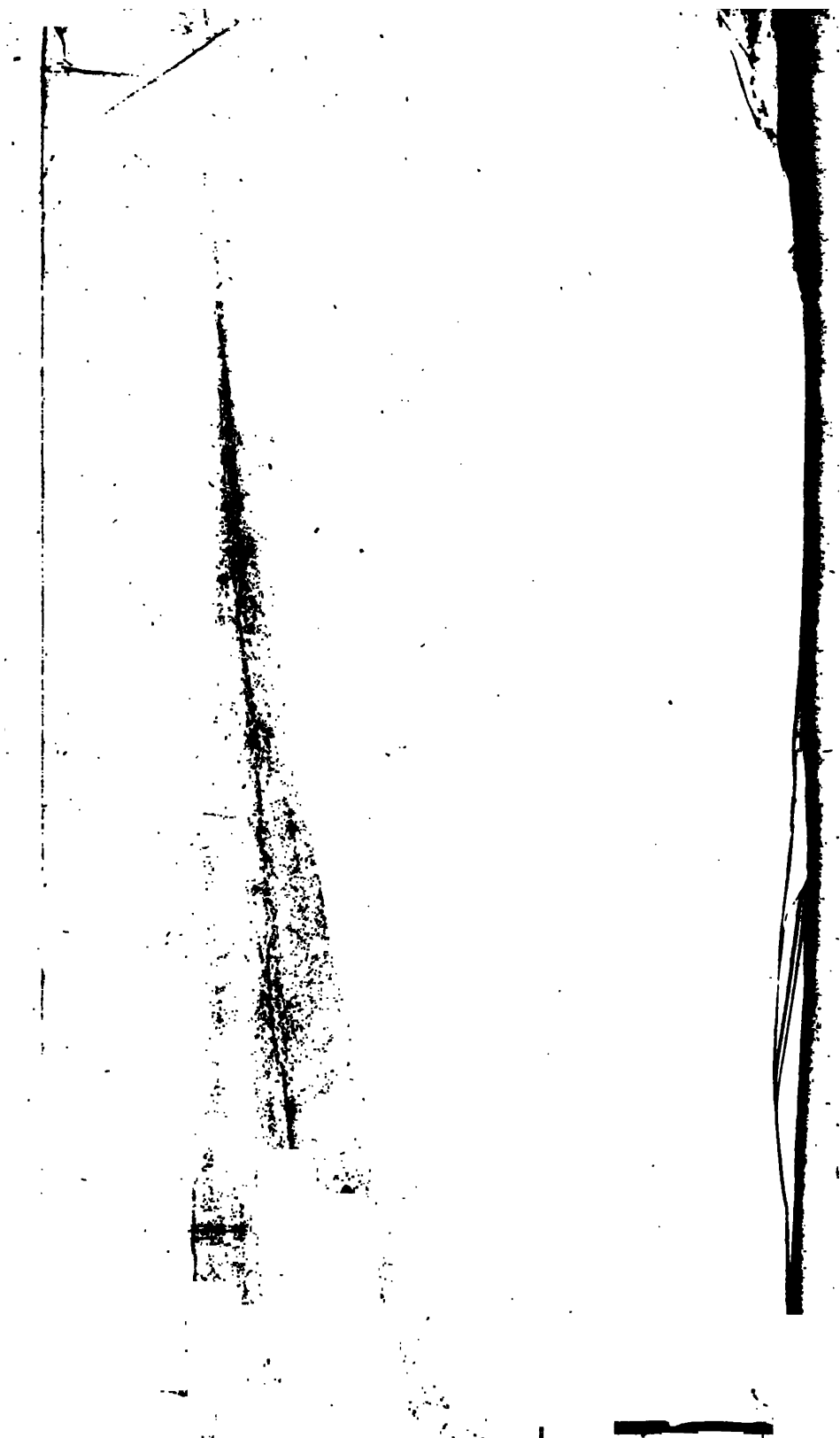
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NARRATIVE
OF THE
LATE CAMPAIGN
OF THE
BRITISH ARMY.







A SHORT
NARRATIVE
OF THE
LATE CAMPAIGN
OF THE
BRITISH ARMY
UNDER THE
ORDERS
OF THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL OF CHATHAM, K.G.
WITH
PRELIMINARY REMARKS
ON THE
TOPOGRAPHY AND CHANNELS
OF
ZEELAND.

Præus quàm incipias consulo : ubi consulueris maturè facto opus est.

SALLUST. de Bell. Cat.

LONDON:
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1810.
W. Flint, Printer, Old Bailey.

“ Quel Principe che manca di questa perizia (la cognizione de' siti) manca della prima parte che vuole
“ avere un Capitano ; perchè questa insegna trovare il
“ nimico ; pigliare gli alloggiamenti, condurre gli eserciti, ordinare le giornate, campeggiare le terre con
“ tuo vantaggio.”

Machiavelli—Il Principe, cap. xiv.

PREFACE.

IT is a circumstance much to be lamented that our late military annals have neither tended to enhance the reputation of our army nor to command the respect of the other nations of Europe.

With an unprecedented disposable force, with means and resources hitherto unequalled, with soldiers distinguished for a native valour, superior perhaps to that of any others in the world, and in a situation of affairs requiring every exertion of foresight and wisdom, the operations of our

armies have not only been useless to ourselves and our allies, but have almost universally terminated in failure ; and though the bravery of our troops has been amply displayed, it has only been to reflect more disgrace on the ~~conduct and~~ councils which could not render such courage productive of any useful result.

Our expeditions to Holland, Ferrol, Cadiz, Egypt, Buenos Ayres, Sweden, and the peninsula of Spain, many of our enterprizes in the Mediterranean and the West Indies ; and though last not least replete with error and misfortune, our late intended attack on Antwerp, furnish both the proof and the explanation of this melancholy statement. In many of these instances success was impossible ; in all of them, a want of information has been eminently conspicuous. Ignorant alike of the

nature and strength of the country to be attacked, and of the dispositions and interests of its inhabitants ; the authors of our expeditions would seem not even to have calculated the ordinary chances of success, but lost in presumption and negligence, to have hoped to command good fortune, while they took no pains to ensure it.

The success of a British army in Egypt may by some be thought to furnish an exception to the foregoing remarks ; but it may justly be said, that in that instance we were too much indebted to the folly and jealousies of our adversary to establish our own character for foresight and judgment.

It has fallen to the lot of the author of the following pages to have participated in many of these services : for his own in-

struction he has attentively observed and reflected upon the manner in which our operations have been conducted : he had anxiously hoped, that the awful lessons of experience would have produced a change in our military system, and that some attempt would have been made to remedy its defects : he has, however, had the mortification to see the same errors persevered in with unaccountable obstinacy.

To check the progress of such alarming evils must be the anxious wish of us all ; and perhaps nothing could be more advantageous in this respect than an accurate and impartial history of our several campaigns. Our legislators and our commanders would thereby be enabled to appreciate the causes of ill success, and prevent their recurrence.

The author of the following pages has undertaken to sketch the history of our late expedition to Zeeland, not only because of the extraordinary mismanagement with which it was conducted, but because of its recent occurrence, and of the attention which it is likely to meet with in parliament; he is actuated solely by the desire of rendering service to his country: he feels neither personal dislike nor resentment against any individual who has participated in these unfortunate transactions; he has laboured to speak the truth; and he believes the most careful examination will not be able to disprove the accuracy of his statement.

The narrative is preceded by remarks on the topography and channels of Zeeland: these observations are derived from the most authentic sources, and being both

accurate and important they will not only enable the reader to understand the movements of the army more clearly than he otherwise could do; but may serve as an humble specimen of one branch of the knowledge which ought to be acquired before a military enterprise is undertaken.

Our powerful enemies seem fully aware, that success in military operations cannot be calculated upon without a perfect topographical and statistical knowledge of the country, in which their arms are destined to act; and an acquaintance with the force, views and intentions of the power with whom they are contending. In the pursuit of this knowledge they spare neither labour nor expense: and when they are possessed of it they are enabled to concert the best advised and most skilful manœuvres, which, being executed with ex-

treme rapidity, surprize and confound their opponents.

It becomes us to derive instruction even from our enemies ; and the author has published the following pages, in the sincere hope that reflection on the errors he *has* related may be useful to those who are entrusted with the direction and conduct of our military enterprises.

tion, but after frequent windings, they are united by the channel of Bergen-op-Zoom and inclose the islands of Walcheren, North Beveland, Wolphartdyk, and South Beveland; opposite to the south-eastern extremity of which, they spread themselves into a sort of bay, and receive the river Scheldt; from whence they have derived their appellation.*

The channel of the West Scheldt is bounded by the shores of Walcheren and South Beveland on one side, and by the coast of Flanders on the other: the distance from Flushing to the nearest point of Cadland being about three English miles.

Between the West Scheldt and the ocean are several dangerous shoals, which are in-

* This description has been adopted, first, because the tides always fall back into the West Scheldt from the place where they meet in the Bergen-op-Zoom channel; shewing that there is a descent in that direction: and, secondly, because, as far as the author could judge, the water before Bathz is as salt as the ocean. The opinion most generally received, that the river Scheldt divides itself into two branches at the south-east extremity of South Beveland, and that these branches flow into the German ocean to the north and south of the Island of Walcheren, is erroneous.

perfected by three channels, navigable for the largest ships of war, called the Deurloo, the Weilinge, and the Inner Weilinge.—The Weele Spliet, which was formerly a fourth passage, is no longer practicable.—The Deurloo channel has a direction along the south-western side of Walcheren; being at a distance from the coast, which varies from six to twelve hundred yards: the mouth of the Deurloo passage is formed by the Zoutelande shoals on the north side, and by the Elleboog bank to the southward.

The outer and inner Weilinge are divided by sand-banks from each other, and have a direction nearly parallel to the shore of Cadzand: the outlet from these into the deep sea is very narrow, and crosses a bank, where there are only six fathoms of water; so that with the wind from the south or west, these two passages become extremely hazardous: with a good wind and fine weather, the Weilinge is, however, considered preferable to the Deurloo.

These different passages unite in the great channel of the West Scheldt, which is about

eight or ten fathoms in depth to the westward of Flushing :—as we proceed from the sea beyond the town, the deep water channel continues for the most part along the shore of South Beveland ; and in many places within one or two hundred yards from its banks.

Beyond Waarden the channel is more removed from the South Beveland coast until it approaches the fort of Bathz, at the south-east extremity of that island, where it is again within one or two hundred yards from the shore, but much more narrow than before. At this point, the sea spreads itself over the very extensive banks of Saefingen, on the coast of Flanders, and becomes six or seven miles in width, forming as it were a considerable bay to the southward. After passing Bathz, the channel is still more confined, though the actual breadth of water at high tide, between the dike of Doel and that of Sandvliet, when we come to what may properly be called the river Scheldt, is about one mile and an half: from Fort Lillo to Liefkenshoek, the distance is about

three quarters of a mile, and this width gradually decreases as far as Antwerp; where the space between one bank and the other is from four to five hundred yards.—From Flushing to Bathz, the course along the West Scheldt is about forty miles in extent; from Bathz to Antwerp, the distance is about twenty miles.

The whole of this extent, and even beyond Antwerp, is navigable for line of battle ships, though, after passing Bathz, the navigation is intricate and difficult; and it is to be observed, that in the West Scheldt there are five or six feet less water with an east and north-east wind, than when the wind is in an opposite direction.

The island of Cadfand is washed by the waters of the West Scheldt, and of the North Sea on its north and west sides: to the east and southward it is divided from the Continent by an inconsiderable sea creek, practicable only for the small boats of the country.

The southern bank of the West Scheldt, throughout its whole extent between Antwerp and Cadfand, is intersected by nume-

rous sea creeks and channels : the country is extremely flat and liable to inundation ; for which purpose sluices have been constructed in the neighbourhood of Axel, Hulst, and the *Tête de Flandres*, opposite to Antwerp.

During fine weather, there is a variety of good anchoring places off the island of Walcheren, and at the entrance of the Deurloo passage : these roadsteads must, however, be considered as untenable in the winter season. The best winter anchoring ground in the neighbourhood of Flushing, commences about one mile to the eastward of that town, and continues as far as the roadstead of Rammikins.

The East Scheldt is bounded by the islands Schouwen, Duiveland, Tholen, and part of Brabant, on the north side ; and by Walcheren, North and South Beveland to the southward. Between the north shore of Walcheren, and the southern coast of Schouwen, is the entrance, which is called the Roompot ; where only a small fleet could anchor without the reach of guns from the dike of North Beveland : this anchorage,

however, is extremely indifferent, and not tenable with strong north-westerly winds, so prevalent on this coast in the winter season. These winds frequently change the bottom of the sea in this part, bringing with them great quantities of sand, so that during the winter the Roompot has a sandy bottom: in the spring of the year, the quantity of water coming through the Keeten drives away the sand, and leaves a bottom of clay. The heaviest sea in the Roompot is caused by a W. N. W. wind meeting the ebb tide.

The deep water channel of the East Scheldt continues along the coast of North Beveland nearly as far as the village of Kolyn's-plaat; then suddenly takes a direction towards Zierickzee, in the island of Schouwen, and passes within three or four hundred yards of the land: from hence is a depth of water sufficient for line of battle ships, as high as Wemelding, in South Beveland; frigates could even reach the town of Tholen; opposite to which, at low water, there are from twenty to thirty feet in the channel; though, on account of its narrow

width and winding direction, the navigation as high as Tholen must be attended with much difficulty. To the extent, however, of Yrfeke, about 30 miles from the entrance of the East Scheldt, the channel is safe and practicable; and off the coast of South Beveland, between the villages of Kattendyk and Wemelding, there is sufficient room for the anchorage of a considerable fleet.*

The Bergen-op-Zoom channel connects the East with the West Scheldt at the east extremity of South Beveland. The distance between the dike of South Beveland, in this part, and the opposite dikes of Oosendrecht and Woonstdrecht, is from two and a half to three miles; but the channel itself is, in many places, fordable at ordinary low water:—during spring tides and an easterly wind, this channel is passable for an interval of two or two miles and a half; commencing about three or four hundred yards north of the little haven of

* During the late campaign Sir Richard Keats's flag ship, the *Superb*, of 74 guns, was anchored off Wemelding, within half-a-mile of the shore.

Bathz :• and the bottom is of sand, with a slight covering of mud ; so that the ford, being practicable for infantry to such an extent, the channel itself cannot be considered as a formidable obstacle to an army intending to act on the side of Brabant. From Bathz to Bergen-op-Zoom, the distance is about six miles. As the tide, even here, rises from eleven to thirteen feet, the Bergen-op-Zoom channel is navigable for gun-boats, and the schuyts of the country.

The Sloe channel connects the East and West Scheldt, and washes the whole of the eastern shore of Walcheren, which forms the west side of the channel ; while North Beveland, Wolphartsdyk, and South Beveland, confine it to the eastward : that part of the Sloe, which commences at the Roompot, is called the Veere Gat, and leads to

• In the year 1572, Mondragone, acting under the orders of the Duke of Alba, marched across the Bergen-op-Zoom channel, at the head of three thousand men. He commenced his march from the villages of Rosendrecht and Woonfdrecht, and his soldiers carried with them their arms, ammunition, and provisions. The object of this enterprise was to raise the siege of Ter Goes, in which the Spaniards were successful.—*See Watson's History of Philip II.*

the town of Veere.—Throughout its whole extent, this channel is navigable for frigates, floops, and gun-brigs: the deep water is generally on the side of Walcheren; the passage is, however, intricate. The nearest point of North Beveland is about two thousand yards from the town of Veere;—the channel is wider opposite to Wolphartdyk: the nearest point of South Beveland is two thousand five hundred yards from the ferry-house on the dike of St. Joostland.

The Zuid Vliet, or Zand Kreek, is a narrow channel, separating North Beveland from Wolphartdyk, and unites the East Scheldt to the Sloe passage: the point of junction with this latter is opposite to that part of the dike of Walcheren which lies between Veere and St. Joostland: at low tide there are eight feet of water in the most shallow part of the channel; and it is navigable for brigs and the larger schuyts of the country.

Formerly there was another passage, the Schengen, or Goefche Diep, between the East Scheldt and the Sloe, but this no longer

exists: dikes having been constructed both above and below the town of Goes, Wolphartdyk and East Beveland are united with South Beveland. This work was begun in April, 1809, and is now nearly completed.

Besides the channels we have enumerated, there are also the Vaart de Sas, the Keeten, the Mossel Kreek, and the river Eendracht, as it is termed, connecting the East Scheldt with the Krammer, and channels of the Maase.

The first separates Schouwen from Duiveland, and is merely a small creek uniting the Krammer with the harbour of Zierickzee, but not navigable for vessels of any description.

The Keeten is a wide and deep arm of the sea, navigable for the largest line of battle ships, and is the grand communication between the Scheldt and North Holland.—The Keeten separates Duiveland from Tholen.

What is called the river Eendracht, is a sea creek, navigable for brigs and the larger boats of the country: this channel is entered

from the Mossel Kreek, which divides St. Philipsland from the island of Tholen.

When the winter is severe, a far greater quantity of ice is collected in the East than in the West Scheldt; but seldom to such an extent as to occasion any serious embarrassment to the navigation of either. In the former channel most of the ice is formed on the *Verdronken** land of South Beveland, or comes through the Keeten, and generally takes the direction of the Zuid Vliet, on the banks of which channel it is deposited, without making further progress towards the sea. The ice in the West Scheldt collects for the most part on the banks above Ternense, or is intercepted by the Caloot shoal, which projects from the south-west point of South Beveland.

The department of Zeeland is divided into the two districts of the East and West Scheldt.

* The "*Verdronken*," or *drowned* land of South Beveland, is a considerable extent of sand and mud, which is covered by the sea at high water.—In the year 1590, the sea washed away the dike at the north-east part of the island, and spread itself in such a manner as to destroy fifteen villages.

In the first are comprehended the islands Schouwen, Duiveland, Tholen, and St. Philipsland. The last comprises North, East, and South Beveland, Wolphartdyk, and Walcheren. Middleburgh is the capital of the latter district; Zierickzee of the former.

The whole of these islands have one general character; their surface is below the level of the sea at high water,* from the inroads of which they are protected by low sand hills in some situations, and by artificial dikes in others. The western shores of

* The following is a statement of the levels of the different islands of Zeeland, below ordinary high water mark :

	MEDIUM LEVEL.	LOWEST LEVEL.
Walcheren.....	4.....	9
Schouwen	5.....	11
South Beveland.....	4.....	8
Tholen.....	5.....	9
East Beveland.....	4.....	7
Wolphartdyk.....	3.....	5
North Beveland.....	3.....	6

In the island of Walcheren, the ground at Flushing and East Capelle is on the same level; Middelburg is generally two feet and a half lower than Flushing.

The feet mentioned in the note are of Amsterdam measure; and the English foot is to the Amsterdam foot, as 1000 to 932 nearly.

Schouwen and Walcheren are exposed to the North Sea, and bounded by a ridge of sand-hills immediately on the coast. The only part of South Beveland which has any natural defence against the sea, is on its south-west side, between Borselen and the Nieuw Crayert : here the artificial dike is interrupted by a low sandy ridge, only five or six hundred yards in length. The sea, however, makes continual encroachments on this natural barrier ; and precautions have been adopted, with great wisdom and spirit, to prevent its further progress.

The soil is for the most part alluvial, and consists of sand, mixed with a blackish sort of earth, such as is found in marshes : strong clay is, however, observed in several situations.* By force of cultivation, and an excellent system of agriculture, the crops are abundant, and the productions various ; such as wheat, oats, barley, rye, horse-beans,

* There are some curious maps extant, which shew the numerous small islands, composing the present island of Walcheren, and the various channels by which they were separated.

white beans, flax, rape-feed, potatoes, and madder : this last abounds most in Schouwen, Duiveland, and Tholen : throughout the whole province there is plenty of fruits and vegetables of every description ; and though there are no trees of considerable growth, the plantations are very numerous, and many of the interior dikes are planted with regular rows of the elm, the ash, and the willow.

Walcheren, towards Domburg and East Capelle, has large coppices of wood ; but it is by no means so productive as the other islands of Zeeland.

Nature has consigned to these islands a most unhealthy climate, producing agues and intermitting fevers ; which diseases, however, are far more dangerous to the stranger than to the native : it is calculated, that after the month of August, and during the rainy season, more than two thirds of the inhabitants are attacked by this disorder, and to this calamity are the people of these islands annually subject.*

* The people of Zeeland have not the least dread of the fever—(the “ *Koorts*,” as it is termed) by which many of

According to a census, made by order of the Dutch government, in May 1809, the following is the amount of the population of Zeeland.

them are annually attacked. They seem not to regard it in a more serious light, than we consider a cold or a head ache : during 1809, the season was particularly healthy. The following is an accurate statement of the numbers of deaths which occurred in the town of Middleburg and its districts during the months of July, August, September, October, and November 1809. It is extracted from the printed register which is published every month at Middleburgh.

	Number of Deaths by the Koorts or Fever.	Number of Deaths from other causes.	Total.
July.....	4.....	32.....	36
August.....	6.....	34.....	40
September....	11.....	47.....	58
October.....	9.....	37.....	46
November....	9.....	47.....	56

In this statement are included persons of every age and both sexes. Middleburgh and its district contains 16,184 inhabitants.

WEST SCHELDT.

* Walcheren	-	29,376
† South Beveland	-	12,756
Wolphartfdyk	-	869
North and East Beveland		3,701
		46,702

EAST SCHELDT.

Schouwen	-	11,459
Duiveland	-	3,303
Tholen and St. Philipsland		9,589
		24,351

* Flushing is not here included ; because, by the treaty of Fontainebleau, dated November 11th, 1807, it was ceded to France, with a territory in its front, extending 1,800 metres, about 1970 yards from the place. Within these limits there are no villages : the population of Flushing at that time amounted to about 7,000 persons.

† In this census, the number of inhabitants in the village of Kruinigen, and its district is omitted ; because this part of South Beveland has not yet recovered from the effects of the inundation in January, 1808. The number of inhabitants before that period amounted to about 300 persons.

The islands of Zeeland are intersected in various directions by dikes and water-courses; the former inclose what is termed a * polder, and mark the gradual additions of land, which have been made at different intervals by the labour and ingenuity of the people. With the exception of two or three polders in the north part of the island, a small tract of land near Arnemuida, and a part of St. Joostland, there are no interior dikes in Walcheren. South Beveland, on the contrary, has several; as is the case with most of the other islands. These dikes are formed of well rammed earth, about fourteen or fifteen feet high; their upper surface is in general fifteen or twenty feet in width, and they serve as good roads of communication. Such is also the general profile of the dikes towards the water; but here on their exposed sides, great precautions are taken to secure them by a variety of ingenious expedients. The administration of the dikes form, as may be naturally inferred,

* A tract of land recovered from the sea, and inclosed on all sides by dikes, is termed by the Dutch a *Polder*.

a considerable and important branch in the government of the country : the expence of maintaining them is very great ; and the taxes for this purpose are levied upon the land. The water-courses are merely ditches from twelve to fourteen feet wide, and serve the double purpose of retaining rain water for the cattle during the Summer, and for draining the land in the rainy season.

The principal roads from the towns are paved to a certain distance with stones brought from the continent ; they are wide and the sides of them generally planted with trees, as the road from Flushing to Middleburg, and Veere : where there is no pavement, the principal communications are covered with sand. The roads, leading from one village to another, are extremely indifferent : they are of the soil of the country, and during wet weather scarcely practicable for carriages : in the winter season they are generally under water.

The principal towns in Zeeland are Zierickzee, and Brouwershaven in Schouwen, Tholen in the island of Tholen, Ter Goes, in South Beveland, Middleburg, Flushing,

and Veere in Walcheren. Each of these, with the exception of Ter Goes,* has a convenient communication with the sea, and artificial basons, sufficiently deep for brigs, and the smaller trading vessels of the country.

The following is the present state of their population:

Zierickzee	-	6,025
Browershaven	-	714
Tholen	- -	1,978
Ter Goes	- -	3,952
Middleburg	-	16,184
† Flushing	- -	7,000
Veere	- -	1,806

These towns are very similar to those of North Holland: the streets being paved,

* Ter Goes had formerly its harbour; in consequence however of the dikes, between South Beveland, and Wolphartsdyk, and East Beveland; the communication has been interrupted; and a project is now in contemplation by which it is proposed to unite the bason of Ter Goes with the East Scheldt, by means of an artificial channel like that of Middleburg.

† The bombardment of the town of Flushing has occasioned a considerable diminution in the number of its inhabitants, both by death and emigration.

the houses well built of brick, and extremely neat in their appearance. They are surrounded by ramparts of earth and wet ditches, their former fortifications, but these in every instance except at Flushing and Veere, have of late years been wholly neglected, and the ramparts unprovided with artillery. They have never had any sort of glacis or outworks: a road, planted with regular rows of the elm tree, generally follows the outline of the ditch, and surrounds the whole of the town.

The villages contain upon an average from two to three hundred inhabitants; South Beveland is more interspersed with single farm-houses than the other islands of Zeeland; all of these have large and well thatched barns attached to the farm, capable of containing from four to five hundred men; so that no country could be more favourable for the cantonment of troops.

The province of Zeeland abounds in horned cattle, and affords plenty of milk, and excellent butter; the numerous waggons, and a strong breed of draught horses, which

are met with in all the islands, supply an easy means of conveyance.

The inhabitants of the villages are a sober industrious race of people ; attached to their own customs and prejudices, slow of comprehension, but patient and persevering : constantly engaged in the pursuits of agriculture, they lead a life of routine and uniformity ; their chief anxiety is the security of their dikes, and in the preservation of these, they have ever displayed great skill and perseverance.

The inhabitants of the towns of Zeeland present greater originality of manners than perhaps occurs in any other situation, so open to communication and intercourse, with the rest of the world. The influence of climate is in this respect highly remarkable. The natives of towns, and particularly sea ports, of almost all European countries, bear a great resemblance to each other, both in habits and character : they are generally lively, intelligent, and inquisitive : it is not so in Zeeland. The inhabitants live much within themselves ; their intercourse is generally confined to their own fa-

milies: the pleasures of mixed society are but little known or valued; their feelings are dull, and they are only affected by what immediately concerns them. In the towns, as well as in the villages, the men, even in the higher classes, are constantly smoking, an expedient resorted to as the means of banishing all sort of thought, and the grand solace of minds vacant and uncultivated.

Throughout Zeeland there are no springs or fresh water rivers. The rains alone supply the water, which is consumed by the inhabitants, and for the purpose of collecting it, each house has its tank or cistern: the country is also intersected by ditches and water-courses in every direction; on either side of the sand-hills, whether towards the land or the sea, a better sort of water, the deposit of the rains, is found by digging at the foot of them; as is indeed the case in all sandy heights near the sea: the same fact is observed on the coasts of Egypt, as in the provinces of North Holland and Zeeland.

The island of Walcheren is the most populous and most important of all the islands of Zeeland. Middleburg is the seat of government, and capital of the province.—Flushing and Veere offer good harbours on the sea, and the former has always been a considerable naval establishment. Walcheren is about thirty-six miles in circumference; towards the North Sea it presents a ridge of sand-hills generally from thirty to sixty feet above the level of high-water mark: this ridge, commencing about a mile to the southward of the Haak battery, extends along the coast to within one mile and a half of Flushing, and this space, with the interruption of a small sandy height, is occupied by an artificial dike, connecting the western coast of the island with the town. It is true, that this chain of sand-hills is interrupted by the celebrated dike of West Cappelle; which extends about two miles, forming an artificial shore, and uniting the Domburg sand-hills with those of Zoutelande: formerly, however, there was no interruption in the chain, and the interior substance of the dike is actually composed

of the low sandy heights, which once served as a natural barrier against the ocean. Eastward of Flushing, with the exception of a small interval of sand-hills, about four hundred yards in length, and commencing about a quarter of a mile from the town, an artificial dike is continued along the eastern shore of the island, as far as where the natural sand-hills commence near the Haak battery.

Towards the north point of the island the sand-hills occupy a space about three quarters of a mile in breadth; as they extend to the west and southward their breadth gradually decreases; until at last, towards Zoutelande, and more to the southward, they constitute a steep and narrow ridge; the summit of which nearly terminates in a point. These heights, immediately on the sea coast, consist of a fine sand, the surface of which is continually shifting with the wind: the land sides are interspersed with a coarse sort of grass, which naturally grows there; tufts of which are planted, in many instances, on the slopes towards the sea, for the purpose of preserving and retaining the sand. The sand-hills between West Capelle

and the northern point of Walcheren offer, in many situations, most favourable spots for huts or encampments: they are considered by the inhabitants as the most healthy part of the island. Indeed, the dryness and elevation of the soil, and its constant exposure to the sea-breezes must, in a great measure, protect them from those disorders which are solely caused by the exhalations of a low and swampy country.

From the Haak battery to the Nolle point the coast invariably presents a flat sandy beach: without bays or indentures of any kind, it offers no favourable points of debarkation, and in many situations a low sand-bank runs parallel to the shore, on which there is continually a surf. Immediately south of the Haak battery is a steep sandy beach, well sheltered from the sea-winds and easy of access: this is by far the best landing-place on the island.

The dike of West Capelle presents an artificial beach of matted straw work; having an inclination towards the sea of one foot in twelve: at the foot of the slope are placed stakes and stones for the security of the dike;

so that a debarkation in this part, even in the finest weather, would be attended with risk and difficulty.

According to the direction of the wind the east or westside of the Bree Zand, (after that part of the coast near the Haak battery) is the most favourable landing place; because there is generally but little surf in this part; although the coast is always flat and inconvenient. Between the Haak battery and West Capelle, the sand-hills are more easily traversed by an invading army, than from West Capelle towards Zoutelande; because in the latter instance they are steep and difficult of access.

St. Joostland may be considered a part of Walcheren, although in fact it is separated from this latter by a creek or inlet of the sea: this creek on one side forms part of the channel communicating with the town of Middelburg, and is called the Welzing Gat: on the other side it is termed the Arnemuidense Gat, and is the water communication between the little town of Arnemuiden and the Sloe channel.

The Polders of St. Joosland were inclosed about the middle of the 17th century.

Immediately opposite to Nieuwland, a village in the island of St. Joosland, commences the canal leading to Middelburg; it is formed by two parallel dikes, extending in a straight line, until they reach the town, about one mile and an half from the Welzinge Gat. The basons of Middelburg formerly admitted vessels drawing from twenty to twenty-four feet of water; but in consequence of the accumulation of mud, and neglect in cleansing the harbour, only brigs and vessels, drawing twelve feet of water, can now have any communication with the town.

At the commencement of the late campaign, the defences of the island of Walcheren consisted of the Fort den Haak, a contemptible work at the entrance of the Veere Gat, inclosed with palisades, but commanded by the adjacent sand-hills, besides seven open coast batteries; which, including the Haak battery, were mounted with about forty pieces of artillery. The principal points,

however, of defence were Veere, the Castle of Rammikins, and Flushing.

Veere, like the other towns of Zeeland, was surrounded by a rampart of earth, with a wide and muddy ditch, which was badly flanked by the works of the place ; the foot of the exterior slope was palisaded ; the town had two entrances on the land side, each having its draw-bridge ; the approach along the dikes was guarded by chevaux-de-frize and double rows of palisades.

The deep water channel of the Sloe passage passes immediately under the walls of Veere ; and as the water is seldom much affected by the wind in this part, the anchorage before the place is safe and convenient : a haven, capable of containing vessels drawing from twelve to fourteen feet of water, extends from one end of the town to the other.

Rammikins was a small fort of brick in a most dilapidated state, and having a high revêtement : its walls were partly washed by the sea : on the land side, except where the dikes met the work, it was surrounded by a deep and impassable marsh. Rammikins

acted as a sea battery, and commanded a good place of anchorage: it was placed at the entrance of the Welzing channel, which leads to the town of Middelburg. The possession of this point is necessary to ensure the communication between the East and West Scheldt by means of the Sloe passage.

The town of Flushing, placed at the southern extremity of Walcheren, contained two considerable basons, the old and new harbour—the former was only practicable for brigs and small merchant ships; the latter was capacious, and with so great a depth of water, that line-of-battle ships, without their guns, might lie there in perfect security*.

The dock-yard was on the east side of the outer bason of the new harbour, which was separated by flood-gates from the inner bason. A seventy-four gun ship, a frigate, and a brig might have been constructed here at the same time: the dock-yard however was

* The French fleet, now at Antwerp, consisting of ten sail of the line, wintered in this bason last year 1808 and 1809. They were not removed from Flushing till the commencement of April 1809.

much confined, and must be considered as having been a very inferior fort of establishment.

Towards the land side, Flushing was inclosed with a line of bastions, extending from one sea dike to the other: these works were of earth, and the foot of the exterior slope palisaded: the flanks of the bastions were perpendicular to the curtain; and their construction was in other respects extremely defective. The rampart was low, commanded by the sea dike, except on the flanks of the position, in great want of repair, without traverses, or bomb-proof cover for the garrison. In front of these fortifications was a respectable ditch, though without any sort of glacis; the bastions on the flanks, where the sea dike met the works, were of brick, in a very weak and neglected state, and liable to be breached at a distance of one thousand yards from the place: in front of each flank on the sea dike, the French had constructed a sort of outwork with a low parapet, on which a few guns were mounted: they had also added a ravelin before each of the gates, communicating with the country. Through-

out the land front there were distributed about fifty pieces of artillery : only fourteen of these were twenty-four pounder guns, the rest were chiefly field-pieces and howitzers : almost all of them were mounted *en barbette* without merlons or traverses.

Towards the sea, the town was enclosed by a wall of brick-work ; behind which was a rampart, in many places offering powerful batteries both of guns and mortars towards the Deurloo channel, and the anchorage in front of the town. By these preparations it would appear that the enemy were in greater apprehension of a sea-bombardment than of a regular attack from the land.

The French, however, had formed more extensive projects of defence, in proportion to the importance they attached to the position : the basis of their plans was founded on a proposed inundation, with respectable casemated works on either flank for the security of the dikes, leading to the body of the place *. They had indeed begun to carry

* The following is the copy of an order of Bonaparte relative to the defence of Flushing :

“ Sa Majesté l'Empereur et Roi, dans un ordre du 26

their projects into execution, as appears by the excavations already made, about 2000 yards in front of the town. The ground in the neighbourhood of Flushing, like the other parts of the island, is much intersected by ditches, and interspersed with plantations of trees and orchards : on the west side, in front of the gate of Middelburg, was a sort of suburb, called Old Flushing.

In the month of July, when the English debarked in Zeeland, there were about four thousand troops in the island of Walcheren ; consisting chiefly of Prussians, Spaniards, Dutch, and Irishmen : the enemy had few artillery-men, and were in fact wholly un-

Mars 1808, a posé les bases de la défense de Fleffingue, dans les termes suivans."

1. " La defense de Fleffingue, est fondée sur l'inondation, en cas que l'ennemi se presente, on doit couper les digues, et mettre l'isle sous l'eau."

2. " Cependant l'ennemi peut toujours cheminer sur les digues : d'ailleurs il faut defendre l'entrée du port pour conserver la communication avec le Continent. Il faut donc qu'on occupe un point sur chaque digue, à environ 1,000 toises de l'entrée du chenal ; de maniere que de chaque côté l'ennemi ne puisse s'établir qu'à 1,200 toises : dès lors le canon est sans effet, et Fleffingue ne peut pas être bloqué."

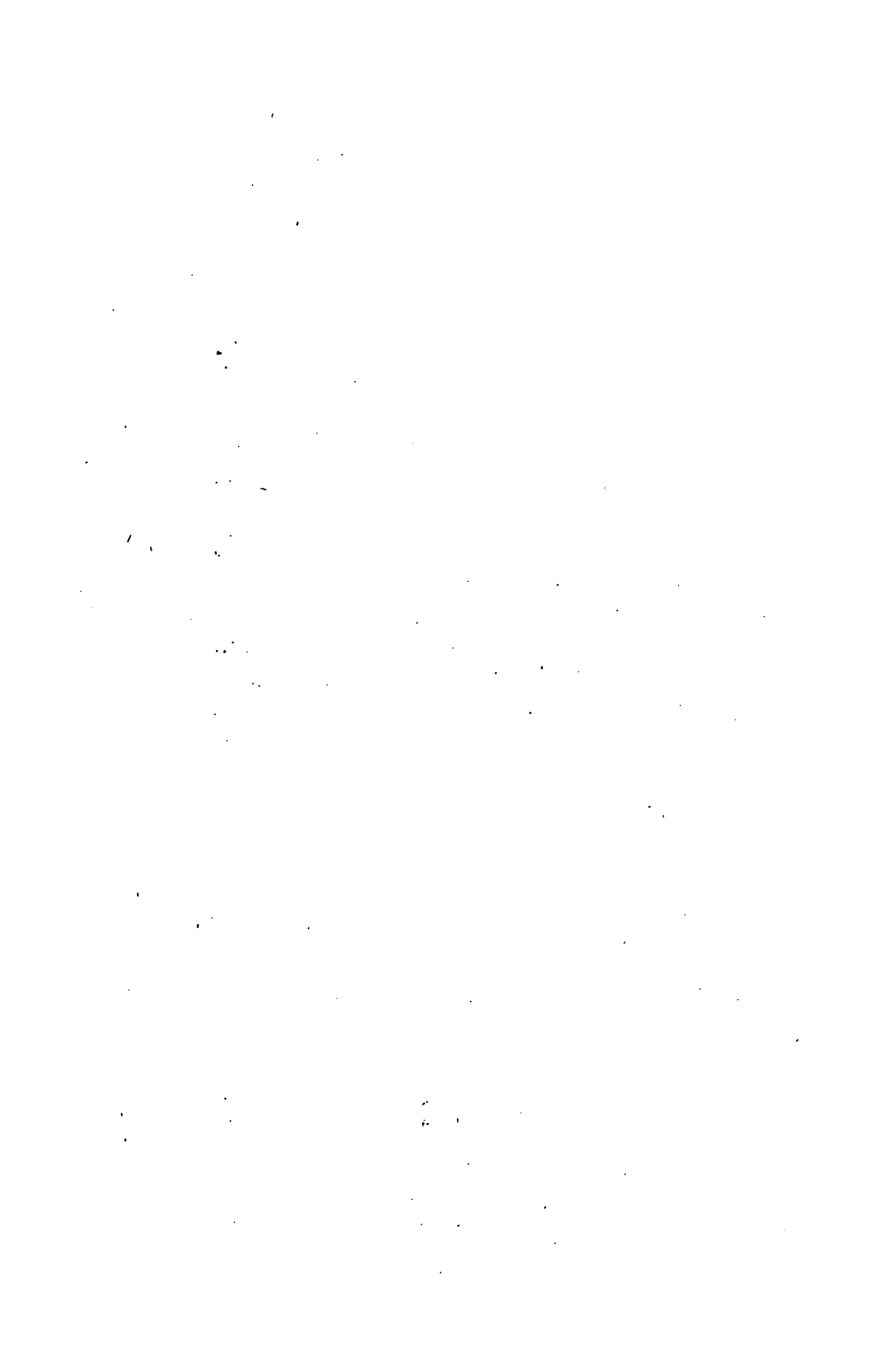
prepared to undertake the arduous labours of the defence of such a place as Flushing.

Throughout the province of Zeeland Walcheren was the only place where any sort of opposition could be expected. South Beveland was wholly without troops : on its southern coast, it is true, there were five open batteries on the sea-dike ; in which were mounted fifty twenty-four pounders, three howitzers, and four mortars. The fort of Bathz,* placed at the south-east extremity of South Beveland, and immediately opposite to the town of Sandvliet, was merely a square earth work, badly flanked ; and contained, with an open battery on the sea dike in its front, fourteen guns, and four howitzers : this fort, however, having a wide wet ditch, was secure from an assault. In Bergen-op-Zoom, the *chef d'œuvre* of the Dutch engineer Coehorn, there were no re-

* The Polder of Bathz was inclosed in the year 1775 :— it extends beyond Waarden, and is not represented upon any of the printed maps of Zeeland, except in the French chart of the West Scheldt, and in a general map of Zeeland, published by Covens and Mortier, at Amsterdam ;—and in this last it has been added to the plate, after the original publication.

gular troops : it was without any sort of garrison.

Above the fort of Bathz, the defences of the Scheldt consisted of Fort Lillo on the right, and Liefkenshoek on the left bank of the river; besides other more considerable works between those places and Antwerp. Above the town of Antwerp is a regular citadel; while the approach on the left bank is covered by an outwork, called the *Tête de Flandres*; the ground in front of which may be easily inundated; and the same advantage may be obtained in the neighbourhood of Lillo and Liefkenshoek. The coasts of the East Scheldt were wholly unprotected: not a gun, not a soldier stood in our way, from the Roompot to Bergen-op-Zoom.



NARRATIVE, &c.

THE preceding description, which the author has feared to extend too much into minute detail, will convey to the general reader a sufficient knowledge of the nature of the islands of Zeeland; of the navigation of the various branches of the sea, by which they are intersected, and of the unprepared state of the enemy. No more has been adduced than what might, and ought to have been known by the Cabinet and the Commander in Chief before the departure of the expedition. The proximity of the situation, and the continual intercourse which has existed between the shores of Holland and our own country, afforded ample means of information; while the assumed importance

of the enterprise, and above all the risk of tarnishing the honour of a British army, and degrading the wisdom of our councils, imposed the necessity of obtaining the most perfect knowledge of every circumstance connected with the undertaking. It will however appear in the sequel, that scarcely any part of such knowledge was possessed either by those who planned, or by those who conducted the expedition.—The face of the country, its soil and climate; the navigation of the East Scheldt, and the absolutely defenceless state of its shores; the defences of Walcheren, South Beveland, and the southern shores of the West Scheldt, and even the geographical position of the fort of Bathz,* were all unknown.

In a state of afflicting doubt and ignorance; both unacquainted with the country and the resistance it might oppose to us, we were obliged to detach reconnoitering parties

* It is an extraordinary fact, that on the printed maps of Zeeland and part of Flanders, delivered to the Staff from the Quarter-Master General's office, Bathz was marked in manuscript letters six or seven miles to the westward of its real situation.

to ascertain the facts which have been stated and might have been previously known : much time was in consequence lost ; and such were the measures adopted, that had the enemy conducted himself with vigour and judgment, the partial success that we met with could not have been obtained.

Such a statement will naturally amaze and shock every reflecting mind :—in other times it would have been incredible ; but frequent failures have prepared us to believe in the misfortunes of our armies ; and the truth of what has been said, and what follows, may be established by a reference to authentic documents, and by the concurrent testimony of every disinterested officer who attended the expedition.

Towards the end of July was assembled, on the shores of England, one of the most considerable armaments that had ever been prepared in this country ; consisting of a military force of 34,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry, sixteen companies of artillery, one troop of horse artillery, three hundred military artificers acting under twenty-eight officers of engineers, two companies of the

staff corps, and a detachment of the waggon train; the whole commanded by the Earl of Chatham: and of a naval force of thirty-nine sail of the line, and thirty-six frigates, besides mortar vessels and gun-boats, under the orders of Rear Admiral Sir Richard Strachan.

The immediate object of this armament was supposed to be the occupation of some of the islands of Zeeland, and the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet in the Scheldt. The arrangements with respect to the debarkation of the army were for the most part intrusted to Sir Home Popham: indeed from the great local knowledge which that officer was supposed to possess, it was thought by many that he was the original mover of the expedition, and that the general disposition of attack had been suggested by him.

The following is an outline of the plan that was formed before the departure of the army from the shores of England. The occupation of Walcheren was confided to Lieut. General Sir Eyre Coote, and the left wing of the army, consisting of 13,000 men: the

point of debarkation depended upon the direction of the wind, and further operations on the state of the defences of the island : for such was our information, that it was doubtful whether Veere, Middelburg, and Flushing, were not places of considerable strength, and each requiring a separate attack.

The Marquis of Huntley, at the head of 5000 men, was directed to land upon the island of Cadland, and to maintain himself in an intrenched position, with a view to cut off the communication between the town of Flushing and the continent.

A force of 5000 men under Lieutenant-General Grosvenor, was destined to occupy the island of Schouwen, while Sir John Hope, with the reserve, amounting to 7500 men, was ordered to effect a landing in South Beveland, to carry the enemy's defences in that island, and act as a corps of observation during the attack of Walcheren.

It was understood that the remainder of the army, consisting solely of Lord Rosslyn's division, about one third of which were cavalry, would remain embarked until their

services were required for the prosecution of the ulterior object of the armament.

Such was the disposition for the movements of the army previous to its departure from England : the possession of Walcheren was the primary object, and considered indispensable to the success of our views on the enemy's squadron and arsenal at Antwerp.

The Venerable, of 74 guns, having on board the Earl of Chatham, and Rear Admiral Sir Richard Strachan, and accompanied by the divisions of Sir John Hope and the Marquis of Huntley, sailed from the Downs on the morning of the 28th July : on the evening of the same day, the Commander in Chief anchored off the west coast of Walcheren, and Sir John Hope took a station about seven or eight leagues in a westerly direction from that island. The Marquis of Huntley, after anchoring twice in the Weilinge passage, at length took his station off Cadzand, on the 31st July, previous to the intended debarkation of the troops under his command. The left wing, under Sir Eyre Coote, followed on the 29th July, and

joined head-quarters on that evening, and on the morning of the 30th.

General Grosvenor's division, which had sailed from Harwich, anchored in the Roompot on the 1st of August.

During the 29th July, a strong breeze from the westward rendered a debarkation on the western shores of Walcheren, and on the island of Cadfand, wholly impracticable. On the 30th, the left wing of the army, under Sir Eyre Coote, steered directly for the Roompot, and in the course of the afternoon, a detachment of this corps effected a landing, without opposition, on the Bree Zand, at the northern point of the island of Walcheren. The Haak battery was immediately carried, and the English force took up a position, with their left at the Haak battery, and their right in the sand hills; the village of East Capelle being in front of the center. Towards night, a part of the 71st regiment, under Lieut. Colonel Pack, advanced upon Veere; and Colonel Pack, himself, was actually upon the standing part of the bridge at the entrance of the town, the draw-bridge having been previously raised, when a galling fire

of grape compelled the detachment to retire, with the loss of twenty men killed and wounded.

In the mean time every exertion was used for the debarkation of the whole of the left wing of the army; the boats and launches attached to Sir John Hope's division were ordered to assist during the night of the 30th; and on the following morning the remainder of the corps under Sir Eyre Coote was disembarked; and preparations were made for the forward movement of the army: early on the morning of the 31st, a brisk cannonade was commenced by our gun-boats on the town of Veere, which was vigorously returned by the enemy, and at that time they shewed no intention to capitulate. — Lieutenant-General Frazer, with part of his division, was therefore left to mask the position of Veere; and about one o'clock in the afternoon of the 31st July, the army advanced in three columns: the right column moved towards the village of Meliskerke: the centre, under Lord Paget, on Grypskerke: and the remainder of General Frazer's division, under General Houstoun, upon

the village of St. Laurens. The French General Ofsen, who commanded the corps destined to watch the movements of the British army, having retired beyond Middelburg, that town, without guns or garrison, was permitted to enter into a capitulation, consisting of eight articles, which was signed on the 31st July: a circumstance that perhaps betrayed some ignorance in the practice of war; for, on the same principle, we might have been delayed by making terms with every village in the island.

On the morning of the 1st of August, the garrison of Veere, amounting to 519 officers and soldiers, capitulated, and were made prisoners of war: on the same day, General Graham's corps moved forward on the right, Lord Paget's in the centre, and General Houstoun's on the left, for the investment of the town of Flushing: the advance of the troops was sharply contested by General Ofsen on the Middelburg road, as well as on the right, in the sand hills, where the enemy's riflemen were continually engaged with the advanced guard of General Graham's division. On the evening of the 1st of August,

the British army occupied the following position : the most advanced part of General Graham's corps was posted on the dike beyond the Nolle point ; Lord Paget held West Souburg, and the neighbourhood ; and part of General Frazer's division, East Souburg, the village of Ritthem, and a point on the eastern sea dike of the island, about two miles from the town.—General Frazer, after leaving a small detachment at Veere, took post at Ritthem, with the remainder of his division, having previously detached a corps for the reduction of fort Rammikins.—Head quarters were established at Middelburg.

The commanding officers of artillery and engineers were now directed to use every possible exertion in forwarding the preparations necessary for the attack of Flushing : heavy artillery was disembarked, depots of entrenching tools were formed, and every arrangement made for immediate operations against the town.

In the mean time the fort of Rammikins surrendered on the afternoon of the 3d August, before the battery which had been erected against it was completed ; and one

hundred and twenty-seven persons, including the commandant, officers, and private soldiers, were made prisoners.

While the left wing of the army was employed in the investment of Flushing, the reserve took possession of the island of South Beveland; and we have now to describe the operations of that corps of the army.

On the 29th July, Sir John Hope's division, conducted by Rear Admiral Sir Richard Keats, proceeded along the north-west coast of Walcheren, passed the entrance of the Veere Gat, and about four in the afternoon anchored in the Roompot, between the islands of Schouwen and North Beveland.—Sir Home Popham, in a small vessel, immediately proceeded to reconnoitre the channel as far as the village of Kolyn's plaat in North Beveland, about nine miles from the fleet, and found it practicable for the largest ships of war. Sir Home returned that evening to the Commander in Chief, and made his report to Sir R. Strachan, who was still at anchor off the west coast of the island of Walcheren.

On the following day, July 30, Captain

Peake, of the royal navy, and an officer of engineers, were directed to reconnoitre the channel and shores of the East Scheldt, as far as it might be practicable: they proceeded nearly to Wemelding, in South Beveland, and reported, that the shores on either side were wholly without defence; and that a channel, having a depth of water from five to ten fathoms, extended the whole way from the Roompot to the village of Wemelding; a circumstance, with regard to which there had, till that moment, existed the greatest doubt and anxiety.—Sir Home Popham had indeed heard that Dutch East India ships were accustomed to resort to Zierickzee; but he could not speak with certainty as to the possibility of large vessels passing beyond it.

Sir Richard Keats perceiving the difficulty of moving large ships through an unknown channel, exerted himself to collect some of the larger *schuyts* of the country for the conveyance of the troops to the upper shore of South Beveland: Sir John Hope being desirous to effect his debarkation as near as possible to Ter Goes, the capital of the island. This delay became of less

consequence, because of another obstacle which was opposed to the landing of Sir John Hope's division, on the 30th; all the launches and boats under Sir R. Keats, were ordered by signal from the chief flag ship, to assist in the debarkation at Walcheren, and did not return to the squadron till the night of the 30th.

Early on the morning of the 31st of July, Sir John Hope's division weighed anchor, and proceeded towards Zierickzee, in the island of Schouwen; as the squadron advanced, a small flotilla of Dutch gun-boats, stationed at the mouth of the Keeten channel, set sail and made to the northward. About nine in the forenoon, the division anchored off Zierickzee, and remained stationary during the rest of the day; for although the troops had been moved into the boats and small vessels for the purpose of landing near the village of Wemelding, the debarkation was deferred, on account of a very strong wind from the S. West.

In the afternoon of the 31st July, fourteen of the enemy's gun boats escaped through the channel of the Sand Kreek between

North Beveland, and Wolphartsdyk : they had sailed from the harbour of Veere ; and after exchanging shots with the *Crocus* brig of war, which had weighed anchor for the purpose of engaging them, these gun boats steered directly towards Tholen and Bergen-op-Zoom. Had Sir R. Keats been informed of the situation of this channel, and its connection with the Veer Gat, these vessels would inevitably have fallen into our hands.

Three of the enemy's line of battle ships were perceived at anchor towards the East extremity of South Beveland : on the following day these vessels weighed, and joined the remainder of the fleet above Lillo and Liefkenhoek.

On 1st of August, the weather being more favourable, the brigs of war and smaller armed vessels proceeded to take their station off the shore of South Beveland, between the villages of Wemelding and Kattendyk ; with a view to cover the landing of the troops, it being then unknown whether or not any opposition might be expected : the troops were put on board the boats and launches of the squadron, while at the anchorage off

the town of Zierickzee; and about one o'clock in the afternoon two thousand men were disembarked on the dike between Wemelding and Kattendyk, about five miles from Ter Goes, the capital of the island: soon afterwards, the magistrates of the town came forward, and placed themselves under the protection of the English. Head quarters were immediately established at Ter Goes; Lord Dalhousie occupied the village of St. Graven Polder, Sir William Erskine Wissenkerke and the neighbourhood; while General Disney advanced to Capelle, with orders to patrol as far as Vlakte and Schore in the center of the island. The remainder of Sir John Hope's division were landed on the following day.

On the morning of the 2d the brigade of Guards under General Disney moved forward and occupied the villages of Waarden and Krabbendyk. Lord Dalhousie's brigade was cantoned at Schore, and Sir William Erskine occupied Capelle: the advanced guard of General Disney's corps fell in with and made prisoners about one hundred men including three officers of a Dutch

regiment: part of a detachment, which under their General Bruce had made their escape across the Sloe passage from the island of Walcheren on the 31st July. On the road between the villages of Kruinigen and Waarden, the enemy had commenced a battery of three guns; which, however, they precipitately abandoned, and retired towards Bathz, when they were informed of the advance of the English.

Sir John Hope, after the arrival of the troops at Waarden, directed an officer of engineers to reconnoitre and report upon the situation and strength of Fort Bathz: the nature of its defences was wholly unknown at head quarters; indeed most of our superiors had an idea, that it was placed on an insulated spot, built with masonry, flanked, and well planted with cannon. While the reconnoitring party was on its march, messengers arrived from Bathz, stating, that General Bruce, after spiking the guns and destroying the ammunition in the fort, had crossed over to Bergen-op-Zoom with the remainder of his detachment, and requesting that the English would take

immediate possession. General Disney in consequence moved forward with a small detachment, and Bathz was occupied about seven o'clock in the afternoon of the 2d August: so that the whole of South Beveland was in our possession thirty hours after Sir John Hope's debarkation.

How fortunate for this part of the operation, that the fort of Bathz proved so very different both in situation and importance, from what it had been represented at the head quarters of the Commander in Chief. Sir John Hope was not provided with a single piece of heavy artillery: and, if the Dutch General Bruce had acted like a foldier, he might have seriously delayed the success of the operations of the reserve: for although Bathz is a contemptible work, a wide and deep ditch protects it from a *coup-de-main*; it would have been necessary to establish some sort of battery for its reduction; besides the place is situated precisely on the deep water channel of the West Scheldt, and the numerous ships of the enemy both above and below Lillo would have constantly supplied and reinforced the garrison, while the

gun-brigs and smaller vessels would have effectually co-operated in its defence.

From this period, the 2d August, Sir John Hope's division remained inactive in South Beveland, and was considered merely as a corps of observation during the attack of Walcheren.

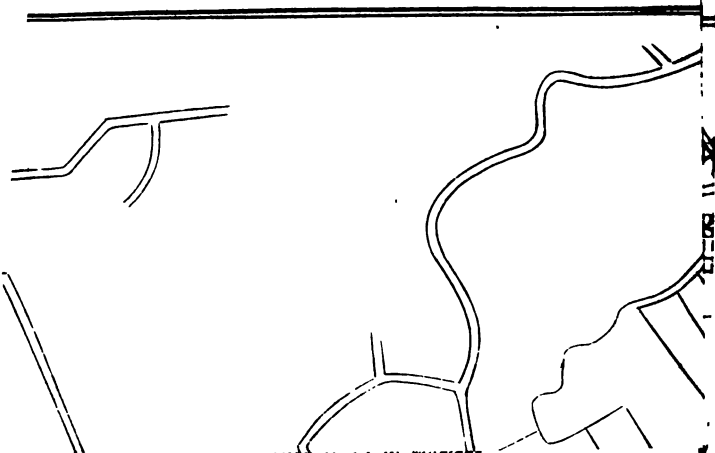
In the mean time, the shores of the East Scheldt having been found defenceless, General Grosvenor's division, instead of disembarking on the island of Schouwen, landed on the coast of Walcheren, and proceeded to assist in the operations before Flushing. The debarkation on the island of Cadzand did not take place, because no greater number of boats could be collected, than sufficient for the transport of six hundred men at once to the shore. This detachment, it was conceived, would be too small to effect a landing in the face of the enemy and for the present, the division of the Marquis of Huntley remained inactive off the shore of Cadzand.

We now return to the operations against the town of Flushing. The original plan of attack was to reduce the place by means

of bombardment : and batteries were proposed and established without any sort of consideration or reference to the enemy's defences : we unskilfully decided to take by violence what might have been far more easily secured by scientific and able arrangements : we employed thirty-two guns, twenty mortars, and four howitzers to reduce the contemptible fortrefs of Flushing ; which it would appear might have been forced to a more early capitulation by less than half that proportion of artillery. Besides this mode of capturing places is by no means so certain in its effects as a regular scientific attack. Flushing, for instance, covers a large space of ground, and the bombardment alone would never justify its surrender : temporary bomb-proofs might have been formed, and other dispositions made for the safety of its garrison. Such a mode of warfare is also contrary to every principle of humanity or sound policy : by a wilful destruction of the property and lives of the inhabitants of fortified places, we not only aggravate the horrors of war, which every civilized nation ought to endeavour to avoid;

but we naturally and justly excite the eternal hatred of the people ; which, after the conquest of the place, may be of the most serious disadvantage to ourselves. This was always the striking feature of difference between the celebrated engineers Coehorn and Vauban: the former carried the place by hurling as it were indiscriminately the dreadful weapons of destruction ; the latter conducted his attacks with skill, and according to the real principles of science ; and Vauban generally succeeded in a shorter period than Coehorn.

Although the bombardment of Flushing was resolved upon, it does not appear that there ever existed any fixed or combined plan of operations. The batteries and trenches were constructed, one after the other, without method or arrangement ; all indeed was anarchy and confusion ; no officer or soldier in the engineer department knew his situation ; their bodies were harassed with unnecessary fatigue, and their spirits broken by a consciousness of the folly of their proceedings.

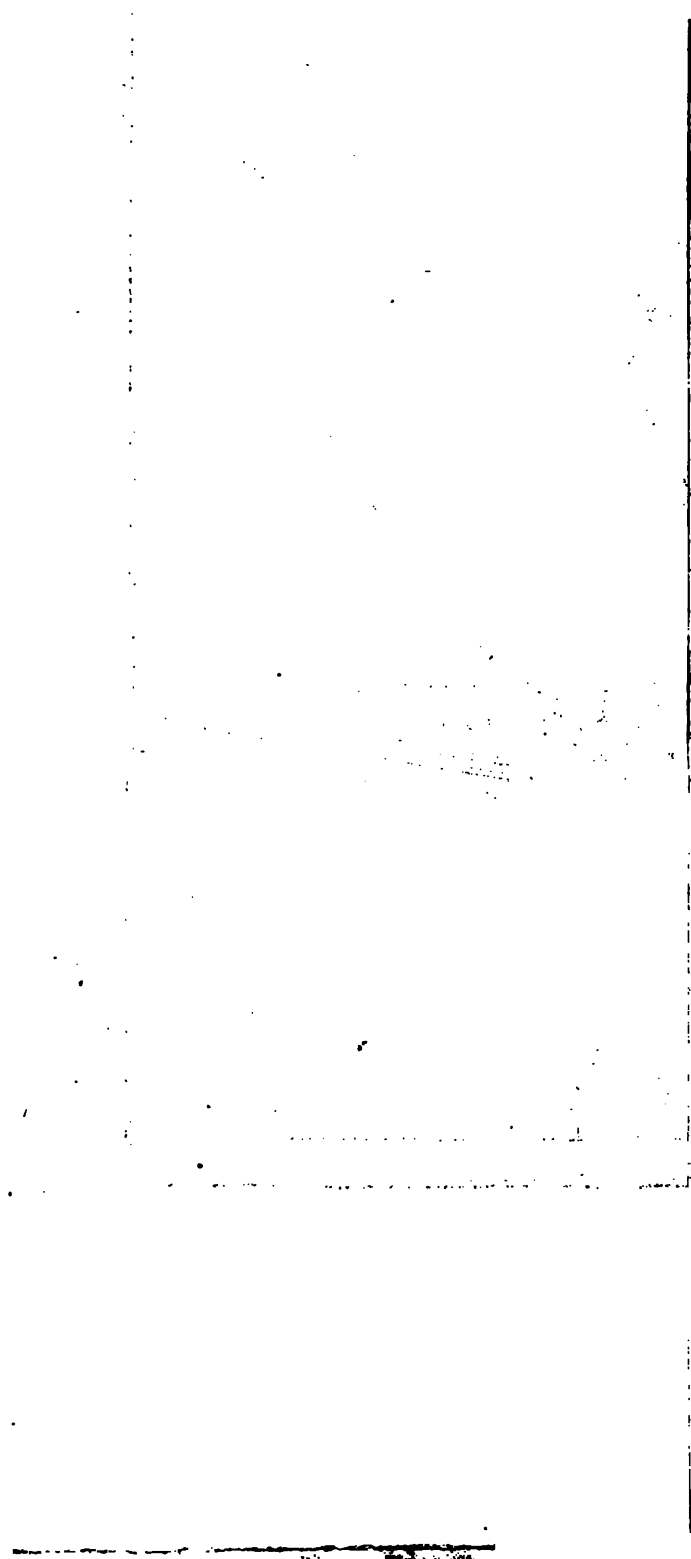


11. 2. 24 P^{rs} 3 18 P^{rs} 3 12 P^{rs} en barbelte.
 12. 9. 24 P^{rs} 2 Mortars.
 13. 4. 24 P^{rs} en barbelte. 3 12 P^{rs} en barbelte.
 14. 2. 24 P^{rs}
 15. Advanced Work W. Dyke 3. 6 P^{rs}
 16. Ravelin 3. 6 P^{rs}
 17. Ravelin 3. 6 P^{rs}
 18. Advanced Work F. Dyke 3. 6 P^{rs}

a. Advanced Battery of the Enemy of 2 Guns.

b. Where the English Picket was entrenched on the night of the 13th August

c. Entrenchment of the French Picket afterwards enlarged and filled with Chevaux de frize by the English.



The troops were actually posted within range of the enemy's guns, before any of the stores necessary for the attack were even landed, and without the advantage of confining him to his fortifications: the soldiers, by an order from head quarters, were compelled to work encumbered with their great coats,* generally without any sort of covering party in their front, and frequently, while the enemy's advanced parties were actually on their flank; the French piquets indeed were suffered to remain in many instances two musquet shots from the place during the whole of our operations: so that by our unskilful disposition, a wooded and inclosed country, which is generally considered a great disadvantage to the besieged, proved of the greatest benefit to him, and a serious calamity to ourselves. At the beginning of the operations, Lieutenant Colonel D'Arcy of the royal engineers, and Colonel Terrott of the royal artillery,

* Extract from the General Orders of the left wing of the army.

West Souburg, August 7th, 1809.

"The men to work in their great coats."

conducted their several departments. In what manner the engineer department was conducted, will appear by a reference to the annexed plan, which shews, that the batteries were generally one thousand yards from the place, and that consequently the extensive parallel, which was constructed at so great a distance from the enemy's artillery, was wholly unnecessary : it will also be observed, that the battery on the foot road, leading from West Souburg to Flushing, was well placed for the enfilade of the front, which was so advantageously attacked from the position of the Nolle: the situation however of the enfilading battery was wholly accidental ; when this work was first projected, no sort of plan had been decided upon ; all was doubt and uncertainty, and the execution of the works was extremely slow, in consequence of the disorder and want of arrangement in the distribution of the working parties.

Thus it would appear, that a want of skill and vigour in the conduct of the attack seriously impeded our progress ; and no more decision was displayed in the other parts of the operations. The

island of Cadſand, which was the only place from whence the enemy could receive ſupplies or reinforcements, was left unoccupied ; and the ſmaller armed veſſels had not yet intercepted the communication. Advantage was ſoon taken of this neglect by the enemy, and on the 4th, 5th, and 6th of Auguſt, about three thouſand men paſſed over from Cadſand to Fluſhing.

Thus reinforced, the garrifon which was before unable to act on the offensive, prepared for active hoſtility ; and about half paſt five o'clock on the afternoon of the 7th, General Oſden with a corps of two thouſand men, made a vigorous ſortie, and attacked the right of our poſition. He was however bravely repulſed by the corps, under Major General Graham, which was poſted in that part of the line ; but the Britiſh ſuffered a loſs of fourteen killed, and one hundred and forty-one wounded.

On the 8th, Brig. Gen. Macleod aſſumed the command of the artillery, and Colonel Fyers the command of the Engineers, by an order from head quarters ; on the ſame day orders were given to prepare the battery on

the foot road in front of West Souburg, for the reception of five guns in addition to the same number for which it had been originally intended.

Though the late fortie shewed an increase of courage on the part of the enemy, he still neglected advantages that were in his power, and took no decided measures to inundate the country in his front. It is true, indeed, that on our first debarkation he had opened the small sluices in the counterscarp of the ditch, and had actually begun to cut the dike to the eastward of the town with the intention of letting in the sea-water. But this latter operation was suddenly abandoned, and not resumed till the 10th; after the English ships of war had placed themselves in such a manner between Cadzand and Flushing, as effectually to intercept the communication, while the weather permitted them to keep their stations.

The town being now completely invested, the French governor seemed to think more vigorous measures necessary for his defence; and, as our position on the left was at a considerable distance from the works of the

place, the cutting of the dike was actively renewed, in sight of General Frazer's division, and the sea water began to flow rapidly through the opening. The water had before been seen to rise in the ditches from the sluices, which had been already opened in the counterscarp of the place; but it now began to flow rapidly through the new opening, and the effects of a more serious inundation were soon perceived. The trenches in many parts became useless, and the platforms of some of the batteries were so far overflowed, as to prevent the manœuvre of the artillery.

While embarrassments were thus increasing on the land side, a light squadron, consisting of ten frigates, at length forced the passage of the West Scheldt, and passed the batteries of Flushing on the evening of the 11th, with the trifling loss of two seamen killed, and seven wounded; these vessels were ordered to proceed to Bantz, and take their station under the fort.

On the 12th the necessary preparations being far advanced, measures were concerted for the bombardment of the town,

both by sea and land. The batteries, which had been commenced on the 3d, were at length finished ; and on the morning of the 13th, the whole of them, (with the exception of what was called the seaman's battery, which was not yet completed,) were mounted with artillery.

Soon after noon commenced a most tremendous fire on the devoted town of Flushing. Against the town only, was our attack directed. The artillery was pointed with the sole view of destroying the houses, magazines, and other buildings. To this end nearly ten thousand rounds of ammunition were expended, and several parts of the town were soon observed to be in flames.

The commanding general, however, being doubtful of the success of the bombardment, and alarmed at the progress of the inundation, which now began seriously to impede our operations in the low ground, determined to carry forward the attack along the dikes on both flanks of the place. In the evening, therefore, a lodgment was made on the right of the line in the sand

hills between the dike of the Nolle, and the body of the place; and operations were also projected for a nearer approach on the left of our position. During the whole of the night an uninterrupted fire was kept up from the batteries, and in the morning of the 14th, the seaman's battery being added to the rest, it was continued with still greater fury. At the same time a breaching battery, intended to act against the left bastion of the enemy's works, was marked out on the right in such a position that if it had been completed, its fire in the course of a few hours would have laid the rampart open, and exposed the enemy to an immediate assault.

Thus passed the 14th, till four o'clock in the afternoon, when the firing was suspended; and the Earl of Chatham directed the commanding general, Sir Eyre Coote, to make an offer of terms to the garrison; the negotiation however having terminated by General Monnet's refusal to surrender, at nine o'clock in the evening, the fire from the batteries recommenced. The bombardment now proceeded with as much violence

as before, and in the course of the night dispositions were made for effecting a lodgment in advance on the left of our position; for soon after our general fire commenced, it was discovered that the battery of three twenty-four pounders on the left of our line, was so far removed from the place, that it was not only unable to injure the works on the town of Flushing, but even to silence a French *barbette* battery of two guns, advanced on the dike about five hundred and sixty yards in front of the fortifications. On the recommendation of Captain Pasley of the Royal Engineers, who was then detached to the left, Lieutenant General Sir Eyre Coote ordered that the dike should be occupied one thousand yards in front of the existing batteries, in order to enable us to construct others at a proper distance from the place; and that the enemy's advanced battery should be carried by assault, and the guns spiked, if it were not possible to keep possession of them, and put the battery in a state of defence. Lieut. Col. Pack was charged with the execution of these orders, and as it was

doubtful, whether the cut in the dike, which was in front of the enemy's advanced battery, could be passed except at low water, that gallant officer with detachments from the 36th and 71st regiments set out about midnight, and advancing along the confined breadth of the dike, because all access from the low ground was cut off by deep ditches, and crossing the opening which had been made to let in the sea water, he took the battery at the point of the bayonet; but the officer of engineers, who accompanied Colonel Pack, not thinking a position so immediately under the guns of the place tenable, because of its narrow front, and the obstacles in its rear, Colonel Pack retired with his detachment to his former position. In this little affair the bravery of British soldiers was splendidly exhibited. They brought off forty prisoners; but it is not known how many of the enemy were killed and wounded: the loss on our side amounted to thirty-eight, officers and men in killed, wounded, and missing.

Soon after this affair on the left, about one o'clock on the morning of the 15th,

General Monnet sent to express his desire to negotiate; and the capitulation was at length agreed upon and signed; in which it was stipulated, that the garrison, amounting to five thousand eight hundred and three persons, should lay down their arms in front of the place, and be removed to England as prisoners of war.

When our army entered Flushing, the dreadful effects of the bombardment were discovered: more than two hundred and forty-seven private houses, two churches, and the town house, containing many important public and private documents, were destroyed; and about three hundred and thirty-five inoffensive persons, men, women and children had lost their lives; besides a far greater number who were wounded; the garrison however suffered little, the greater part of them being placed on the right of the town, and in comparative security, on account of the very great distance of our batteries, which were opposed to the enemy in this part.

After the fall of Flushing, there was nothing to divert the attention of the com-

mander in chief from the ulterior objects of the expedition ; which may perhaps appear to have been in some degree neglected, when we have described the occurrences, that took place in South Beveland, from the 2d August to the present period of our narrative.

When the reserve first occupied Bathz, no troops were perceived on the opposite dikes of Brabant or in the neighbourhood of Bergen-op-Zoom. Every circumstance seemed to indicate that the country was without defence : but about thirty French brigs of war were seen at anchor in two separate divisions between Bathz and Lillo ; and ten line of battle ships and three frigates were observed over the land near the town of Antwerp. Though the fort of Bathz was thus important as a point of observation, in other respects it was of still greater consequence. In the event of our advance towards Antwerp, it would have served as a place of depôt, and become in fact the *debouché* of the army ; besides enabling us to command the lower part of the West Scheldt, and the channel of Bergen,

op-Zoom. Sir John Hope was informed of the capture of Bathz at eleven o'clock on the night of the second of August, the head-quarters of the reserve being then at Ter Goes : early on the morning of the third, the intelligence must have reached Middelburg, the head-quarters of the commander in-chief ; who, having entrusted the operations of the attack on Flushing to Sir Eyre Coote, might, without injury to our proceedings in Walcheren, have examined this interesting position at the distance of thirty-three miles on the following day.

On the morning of the third Sir John Hope visited Bathz, and directed that every exertion should be made to re-establish the batteries, and to put the place in as good a state of defence, as circumstances would admit. All the guns had been spiked, and the carriages much damaged by the enemy ; but by the active exertions of Captain Wilmot of the Royal Artillery, five twenty-four pounders were unspiked and ready for action on the morning of the 5th. On that afternoon, the French flotilla stationed below Lillo weighed anchor, and began a distant,

though ineffectual, canonade, which the fort of Bathz was enabled to return, and the enemy soon retired; on the same evening the ford across the Bergen-op-Zoom channel was accidentally discovered; and it was now understood, that during three or four hours in the course of each tide, we had free access into Brabant; yet no *reconnoissance* was made, no exertions used to ascertain the real strength of the enemy. In the event of further operations it might also have been advisable to secure a point on the dike of Oozsendrecht, as a sort of *tête du pont* with respect to Bathz and South Beveland; but nothing of the kind was attempted.

On the 8th the enemy's ships again approached the fort of Bathz, and kept up a cannonade during two or three hours; though with as little effect as before; the batteries were then armed with fourteen twenty-four pounders; all of which were Dutch guns, and had been spiked by the enemy.

On the 9th, the divisions of the Earl of Rosslyn and the Marquis of Huntley

landed and occupied cantonments in South Beveland.

The Marquis of Huntley had remained off Cadfand till the 6th, when he proceeded to the Roompot; where he joined the Earl of Rofslyn, and both divisions were disembarked on South Beveland. From this time the Earl of Rofslyn took the command of the island, and he established his head quarters at Ter Goes: Sir John Hope removed to the village of Schore.

On the afternoon of the 10th, two divisions, each consisting of six gun boats under Dutch colours, sailed from above Lillo, and attempted to reach the town of Bergen-op-Zoom. The first division was successful: but the vessels composing the latter, grounded on the flats in the Bergen-op-Zoom channel during the night of the 10th, and on the morning of the 11th a 24-pounder, and a howitzer being opened upon them, the enemy set fire to their gun boats, and precipitately abandoned them. This was the last attempt made by the enemy during our stay at Bathz; for on the afternoon of the same day (the 11th)

a light squadron of British vessels consisting of 10 sloops and brigs of war, and about 40 gun boats, which had entered the West Scheldt through the Veer Gat arrived, and anchored before the fort. The most advanced of these vessels were stationed half way between Bathz and Lillo, about three miles and a half from each. On the same day a large division of armed flat boats and launches arrived from the East Scheldt, and formed a junction with the former at Bathz. The enemy's flotilla now weighed to seek a more distant station between and under the protection of the forts of Lillo, and Liefkenshoek; and the garrison of Bathz was at length freed from their insulting menaces.

We possessed Bathz on the 2d of August; the East Scheldt was open from the beginning of our operations, since the fall of Rammikins, on the afternoon of the 3d, we commanded the navigation of the Sloe passage; but eight or nine days elapsed before a single British vessel, or armed boat of any description, arrived at this most important part of South Beveland, and

where there was both secure and convenient anchorage.

On the 15th, a capitulation was entered into with the islands of Schouwen and Duiveland ; and a detachment of 100 men from the reserve was sent to occupy the town of Zierickzee, the capital of the former. No resistance was offered at either of those islands : from our first entrance into the East Scheldt, we had had communication with Schouwen.

On the morning of the 16th, the ten frigates which had forced the passage of the West Scheldt on the 11th, anchored in front of Bathz ; and there was now a respectable force in that quarter ; but the situation of the enemy was much changed.

However unprepared they were on our first arrival in Zeeland, it soon appeared that their defences were not neglected : on the 4th, small parties both of cavalry and infantry had been observed in different situations, and on every subsequent day the information was received, that reinforcements were constantly arriving, and the most vigorous preparations making for resistance,

on both banks of the Scheld batteries were erecting to prevent the further advance of our ships; a boom chain had been already fixed across the river, between Forts Lillo and Liefkenshoek; and arrangements were even made by the enemy to sink vessels in a narrow part of the channel between those places and Antwerp. Measures had been taken to cut the dikes of Tholen, and thus overflow the country between that place and Bergen-op-Zoom; as also to lay the low ground in the neighbourhood of Lillo and Liefkenshoek, and the whole of the Polders between Hulst and the *Tête de Flandres* under water. General Bernadotte had arrived at Antwerp, and as French and Dutch troops continued to pour into that town and Bergen-op-Zoom, it became doubtful whether, setting aside the question of a siege, we had a sufficient disposable force after the fall of Flushing, to cope with the enemy in the field; so that even those, who in the first instance had been sanguine enough to think that a successful attack might have been made on the fleet at Antwerp, now gave

up the hope, and were satisfied that all further operations must be abandoned.

The opinion of the commander in chief who had not left Walcheren, appears to have been very different ; and every circumstance now indicated a forward movement in the direction of Antwerp. Soon after the British troops had entered Flushing, a division of line of battle ships proceeded up the West Scheldt towards Bathz ; and on the 18th, the *Courageux* of 74 guns, anchored with the most advanced part of our squadron. Before this, however, (on the 17th) Brig. General Alten's corps was passed over from Walcheren to South Beveland ; the divisions of Lieutenant General Grosvenor, and Major General Graham were re-embarked on board transports ; and ordered to rendezvous with the rest of the army at Bathz ; horse transports, store ships, and vessels laden with heavy artillery ; gun-boats, fire-ships, all were directed to proceed to the same point of assembly.

Thus it appears that before the general in chief had reconnoitred the position of

the enemy ; and before any plan of operations could be decided upon, all our means and all our resources were vauntingly displayed in face of the enemy ; as it were to render our now unavoidable retreat more inglorious ; besides, by thus crowding our ships in a narrow channel, all their movements were embarrassed, and they were exposed to very serious danger ; for, had the enemy acted with vigour, they would have sent down fire vessels upon our fleet ; and if they had not destroyed a portion of the ships, they would at least have produced the greatest dismay and confusion.

On the 19th, it was at length announced in the general orders of the army, that head quarters would be removed to Ter Goes, and a hope of more active operations begun to be entertained ; but on the 20th, it was stated that the removal of head quarters would not take place till the 21st. In fact the commander in chief did not leave Middleburg till that day. Sir Eyre Coote remained with 8 or 9,000 men in Walcheren, and the Earl of Chatham

proceeded to Ter Goes, which town is about 14 miles distant from Middelburg.

On the morning of the 22d his lordship visited and held a conference with Sir John Hope at the village of Schore, which is seven miles on the road from Ter Goes to Bathz ; but he returned to Ter Goes the same evening.

On the 23d his lordship, General Brownrigg, and other officers composing the head quarters of the army, passed through the villages of Schore and Waarden ; and on that day reached the village of Arabendyk, which is about thirteen miles on the road from Ter Goes to Bathz.

A little before noon, on the 24th, the commander in chief had performed the remaining six of the nineteen miles between Goes and Bathz ; and at Bathz head quarters were established eight days and a half after the surrender of Flushing.

On the 25th, the Earl of Chatham held conferences with several of the general officers of the army ; on the 26th and 27th councils of war were assembled on the present state of affairs, and it was soon un-

derstood that the ships of war and transports would immediately retire, and that South Beveland would be evacuated without any further attempt or demonstration. In consequence of this decision, arrangements were made for the removal of the sick and re-embarkation of the different corps in South Beveland.

On the 29th, Lord Chatham removed from Bathz to Ter Goes, and on the 2d Sept. returned to Middelburg. Sir John Hope was entrusted with the final evacuation of South Beveland, and he established his headquarters at Bathz on the 30th of August.

On the 30th and 31st, the enemy opened a fire of guns and mortars from the batteries which they had lately constructed on both banks of the river, and compelled our ships to retire from their advanced position and move nearer to Bathz.

About this time, the islands of Schouwen and North Beveland were also evacuated, and on the 4th of September, the rear guard of the reserve was embarked on board a squadron of frigates, under the command of Lord William Stuart, which sailed at once for the lower part of the

West Scheldt; the line of battle ships and other armed vessels with all the transports having taken their departure from Bathz and the neighbourhood, as soon after the retreat had been decided upon as the wind and weather would permit; so that after the 4th of September, Walcheren was the only island in the province of Zeeland, which remained in our possession.

How fortunate it would have been if the evacuation of South Beveland had been decided upon, as it might have been immediately after the fall of Flushing. It was not evident, that the enemy's fleet could then be attacked with any hope of success, and if that part of the army which was not necessary for the defence of Walcheren had been sent to England, we should not only have been spared the mortification of an inglorious retreat, but we should have saved the life of many a gallant foldier; for about the middle of August, the disease incidental to the climate began to spread its baneful effects in every direction, and many of our men were sacrificed to the unaccountable delay and in-

activity by which a whole fortnight was lost.

Not less dreadful were the ravages of the disease in Walcheren: in the course of two months we had lost 1,700 men, and towards the middle of September, when the disorder was at its height, the average number of deaths was from two to three hundred in a week. Here again we have to lament a neglect and inattention not less unaccountable than the dilatoriness which was shewn in South Beveland. The troops who must always suffer from inactivity suddenly following the fatigues of active service, were ill provided with barracks and bedding. Though Middelburg afforded the best and most comfortable accommodations, the soldiers were quartered in cold and damp churches, and even the hospitals were established in East India warehouses; into which light and air were only admitted through iron gratings; and similar want of consideration was shewn in other parts of the island.

In addition to all this, many of the officers of the medical department were un-

acquainted with the nature of the climate, and their manner of treating it differed entirely from the usual and more dissipated practice of the country. In the mean time no enlarged or effectual expedients were attempted to avoid the effects of the noxious air in the low parts of the island.

It will not have escaped the observation of the reader, that the west and north-west shores of the island of Walcheren are bounded by a range of sand hills. They are intersected by several open and level situations, where our troops might have been posted with the greatest advantage : between West Capelle and the Bree Zand, 20,000 men might have been disposed of without difficulty : and as the air about the hills is much more pure, and the water much better than is found in any other part of the island, great benefit might have been derived from this important circumstance if we had taken advantage of it, as the French had done before us. Between Domburg and West Capelle they had constructed huts of reeds for the cover of 2,000 men : these huts were constantly occupied

during the sickly season; and as they were in good repair, when we were on the island there was no reason why they should not have been used by ourselves, unless the filth from which they might have been easily cleansed, can be considered as a real objection. Some proof of the superior healthiness of the sand hills actually occurred to ourselves; for it was observed, that the Royals who were quartered at West Capelle, which is near the sea, though lodged in a damp church, were far more healthy than any other regiment on the island.

After the evacuation of South Beveland no military event of importance occurred. On the 14th of September, the Earl of Chatham embarked, and set sail for England, leaving Sir Eyre Coote with 15,000 men for the defence of Walcheren. Lieut. General Don was afterwards appointed to succeed Sir Eyre Coote, and he arrived at Walcheren on the 24th of October.

During the whole of this time, it was uncertain whether we were to form a permanent establishment on the island or not;

and this doubt occasioned much inconsistency in our operations. At first, when it was generally supposed that the island would be retained, no serious exertions were made to renew its defences; even the half breached bastion on the left of the works of Flushing, which alone was the ostensible cause of the surrender of the enemy, was not begun to be repaired till the 1st of November.

About the middle of the same month, arrived the order to evacuate the island, and demolish the works and naval basin of Flushing; as far as might be done, without destroying the lives and property of the inhabitants.

On the 26th the work of destruction was begun, and the parapet of the sea lines was destroyed. Yet during this time and many days afterwards, a chain of redoubts between Vere and Arnemuiden, which was begun early in the month for the defence of the frontier, was continued with such activity, that from six to seven hundred peasants were constantly employed there. If this proceeding were intended to deceive the ene-

my, it must be allowed that at length our vigour exceeded the occasion for it.

On the 9th of December, the great body of the army, now much reduced by sickness, was embarked. A small rear-guard only was left to occupy Vere, Middelburg, and Flushing, until the wind permitted our final departure.

On the 10th the flood-gates of the naval basin were exploded with gunpowder. The east side of this basin, which consisted of strong pile work, had been previously removed by the sailors. The west side was not destroyed, as representations were made by the inhabitants, that a loss of at least a part of the town of Flushing would be the consequence. The arsenal and magazines in the Dock-yard were also set fire to and destroyed.

On the 22d, a light breeze from the southward, induced the Admiral, Sir R. Strachan to cause the immediate embarkation of the rear-guard; and on the 23d, the island of Walcheren was completely evacuated by the British army.

The land fortifications of Flushing, the

defences and harbour of Veere, and the Fort of Rammikins were left uninjured.

During our stay in the island, the enemy made no serious demonstration of attack. A corp of troops advanced into South Beveland, and batteries were constructed on that part of the Sloe passage, which is opposite St. Joostland; but they were not armed with artillery. On the Zuid Vliet channel, they had also prepared batteries for the annoyance of our advanced gun boats; but the fire from their artillery produced no serious effect, and Commodore Owen maintained his position in that channel to the last.

Without discussing the political question with respect to Walcheren, it is clear, that if it was not advisable to retain the island, the evacuation should have taken place at an earlier period; and that if it was advisable to maintain this position, we ought to have adopted other measures of defence. The delay and hesitation which marked all our operations, were discreditable to the national character; and the sorrow of those who witnessed the effects of such vacillation was not diminished, when they

heard the dreadful uncertainty of our affairs in Walcheren imputed to the disgusting quarrels of ministers.

After the detail which has now been offered, the author may perhaps be excused; if he presumes to lay before the reader his opinion, as to the operations which might have been undertaken for the reduction of the island of Walcheren, and as to the success that was to be expected in the projected attack upon the enemy's fleet at Antwerp.

When the state of Walcheren and the unfoldier-like character of its governor are considered, it will not appear that the conquest of that island was by any means a difficult undertaking; for although the enemy had occupied the town of Flushing for the space of fourteen years, and this important arsenal had been an integral part of the French Empire since the close of the year 1807, the defences of the place, and indeed of the coasts of the whole island had been almost entirely neglected.

The first object of the attacking army

should have been a complete investment of the place. To prevent the arrival of succours and reinforcements from Brabant and North Holland, the islands of North and South Beveland should have been occupied by a respectable corps of troops, and unless the navy was prepared to cut off all communication with the opposite coast of Flanders, another corps should have landed on the island of Cadland. While these objects were effecting, the force, intended for the attack of Flushing, should have landed a little to the westward of the Haak battery; from whence a detachment should at once have threatened Veere from the land; while a vigorous bombardment was kept up from the sea. After the fall of Veere, the Fort Rammikins should have been compelled to surrender; and the army would then have extended itself from this point to Ritthem, along the rear of East and West Souberg, as far as the Vygeter point, the termination of the Zoutelande sand-hills: this position they might have occupied, while exertions were made for the formation of dépôts of entrenching tools, and for the trans-

port of heavy artillery, previous to the attack of the place. We shall suppose, that these objects might have been attained on the morning of the 2d August, and that on the same night the Nolle and the Sand-hill between that point and the body of the place might have been occupied by a battery of six twenty-four pounders, supported by a short parallel extending from thence across the low ground, till it meets the wood and inclosures between the sand-hill and West Souburg. This battery, acting directly upon the half-ruined wall, on the left of the town of Flushing, and assisted at the same time by a battery of guns and mortars in front of West-Souburg, and about eight hundred yards from the place, so as to enfilade the front attacked, would probably have produced a surrender of the town in less than thirty hours after the commencement of our fire : so that, upon the calculation that these works and the trenches necessary to support them would have been completed before day-break on the morning of the 4th of August, before the night of the 5th, we should have been masters of the place and

its garrison. It will be observed, that the plan here proposed has been founded on a perfect knowledge of the state of the garrison, and the nature of the defences of the island. The impediments which might have been thrown in our way, by means of inundation, have not been calculated upon; because the rapidity of our operations would have prevented our inactive enemy from taking advantage of this expedient. His measures of defence, whether by the disposition of works, or by well judged water manœuvres, were equally weak and contemptible. We certainly might have had possession of the whole island in seven days after our debarkation: though it should be clearly understood, that this opinion is stated on the supposition of the enemy's acting as he did act, and of our operations being conducted as they might and ought to have been conducted.

If the many advantages to be derived from the possession of the island of Walcheren, formed reasons strong enough to induce us to preserve it; we ought, immediately after the fall of Flushing, to have employed our-

selves vigorously in the restoration, or rather the new construction of its defences; and all the other means in our power being used to strengthen the island, there is little doubt but it might have been made quite impregnable; and if the troops, not necessary to garrison the fortresses, had been placed in the most healthy situations, and proper attention had been paid to their quarters, there is reason to believe, that the dreadful calamity by which we were afflicted, might have been greatly palliated. We might at length by clearing away the overabundant wood, and other useful expedients have even rendered the air more salubrious.

With regard to the second operation, which was by many considered the most important object of the expedition: if it were necessary for the reduction of the fleet to carry on a regular siege against the citadel of Antwerp, it would appear, that unless we had had a force double of that which was employed under the Earl of Chatham, such an operation would have been wholly impracticable: before Antwerp could have been reduced, an army superior to our own

would have been collected, and our retreat so much endangered, that no military man of sound judgment would have advised such an undertaking.

Some, however, have said that the capture of the citadel of Antwerp was not necessary to our success, and that the fleet might have been destroyed from the left bank of the river :—let us examine in what manner such an operation might have been conducted.—We will suppose that the commanders in chief of the army and navy were contented with investing Walcheren by sea, without effecting a debarkation on the island ; and consequently, that Lord Chatham and his whole force, about 37,000 men, might at once have proceeded to the attack of Antwerp and the shipping.

Let us imagine that he had landed on the island of Cadzand ; and that he intended to march along the left shore of the West Scheldt, with a view to destroy the fleet from the bank of the river opposite to Antwerp. If we cast our eyes on the map, we shall at once perceive the almost insurmountable difficulties which would have been opposed

to our success ; in the first place the country between Cadzand and Antwerp, a distance of seventy miles, is much intersected with creeks and water courses ; and is in many parts liable to inundation ; besides which there are several places, formerly of considerable strength, and still surrounded by a rampart and a ditch, so that unless occupied by ourselves, (for we will suppose the country in the first instance without troops) garrisons would have been immediately thrown into them, and thus would our line of operation have been intercepted. What opinion could we entertain of a general, who established a line of operation parallel to the enemy's means and resources, and exposed in every part to repeated and constant attacks ?

Again, the island of Cadzand must have been entrenched, and this dépôt of the army guarded by seven or eight thousand men.— Before further operations could have been attempted, three or four days must have been occupied in preparations for transporting our heavy stores and artillery.— The army would not have been in motion

until the enemy had in his turn adopted some vigorous measures of defence; the country near Hulst would have been partially inundated, and the flat land in front of the *Tête de Flanders*, opposite to Antwerp, wholly covered with water. Supposing that the army met with no resistance on its march, it would, at least, require six days to bring our means within reach of the enemy's shipping: and if it had been possible (however incredible) to bombard and destroy the French fleet at Antwerp, by batteries placed on the banks of the river, it may be asked how a British army of 37,000 men, diminished by 7,000 left at Cadland; and one third of the remainder employed to maintain our line of communication, could set itself down, and undertake to act with heavy artillery, with its entire line of operation exposed to the accumulating means of the enemy, and its retreat most eminently endangered?—Such an enterprize would inevitably have failed: it would have been contrary to every principle of military science.

I shall not discuss the opinion entertained, though only by a few persons, that the British

fleet might have forced the passage of the Scheldt, between Lillo and Liefkenshoek ; because I am persuaded, that every naval or military man who has the least knowledge of war, must be fully satisfied of the absolute impracticability of such an undertaking.

If it had been our object to have attempted the capture of the enemy's fleet and arsenal by a *coup de main*, it might have sufficed, in the first instance, to cut off all communication between Walcheren and the coast of Flanders, and the neighbouring islands : this we know might easily have been effected by a proper disposition of our ships on one side, and by landing a corps in South Beveland on the other. A division of the fleet should at once have sailed up the East Scheldt, and have disembarked at Wemelding ; from whence, on the same day, they should have crossed the ford, and have summoned Bergen-op-Zoom ; while a detachment took possession of the open batteries of South Beveland, and the little fort of Bathz, at its eastern extremity : on the second day, a squadron of the fleet, with the remainder of the army, should have forced the mouth of the West

Scheldt, with a view to proceed as far as Bathz, and thus form a junction with the corps already landed in South Beveland. As Bergen-op-Zoom was without a single foldier, it may be supposed that it would have immediately surrendered. On the third day, a corps should have debarked on the Doel Bolder, below the fort of Liefkenskoek, on the left bank of the Scheldt; while the other part of the army moved forward upon Antwerp, from the neighbourhood of Bergen-op-Zoom. In this manner the army would, on the evening of the third day, have surrounded Antwerp, and the ships which were before it; the town would have been threatened with destruction; and as there was no regular garrison in the place, it is possible, though barely possible, that the panic which the celerity of our operations might have occasioned, would have induced the enemy to enter into terms of capitulation.

This appears to have been the only mode in which there was any chance of effecting our object; and certainly the chance thus offered was too small to justify the risk of failure and consequent disgrace. We could

not, without previous information, calculate on the treason or cowardice of the enemy, or suppose that the Governor of Antwerp would submit to the mere appearance of an English army, which had not then the means to carry on a regular attack. If he had no regular troops, he might have employed the crews of the ships as his garrison; and the delay of a few days would have produced our irretrievable ruin. Had we waited for the long labour and process of a siege, we should have had to contend with extensive inundations, and an enemy superior in number to ourselves.

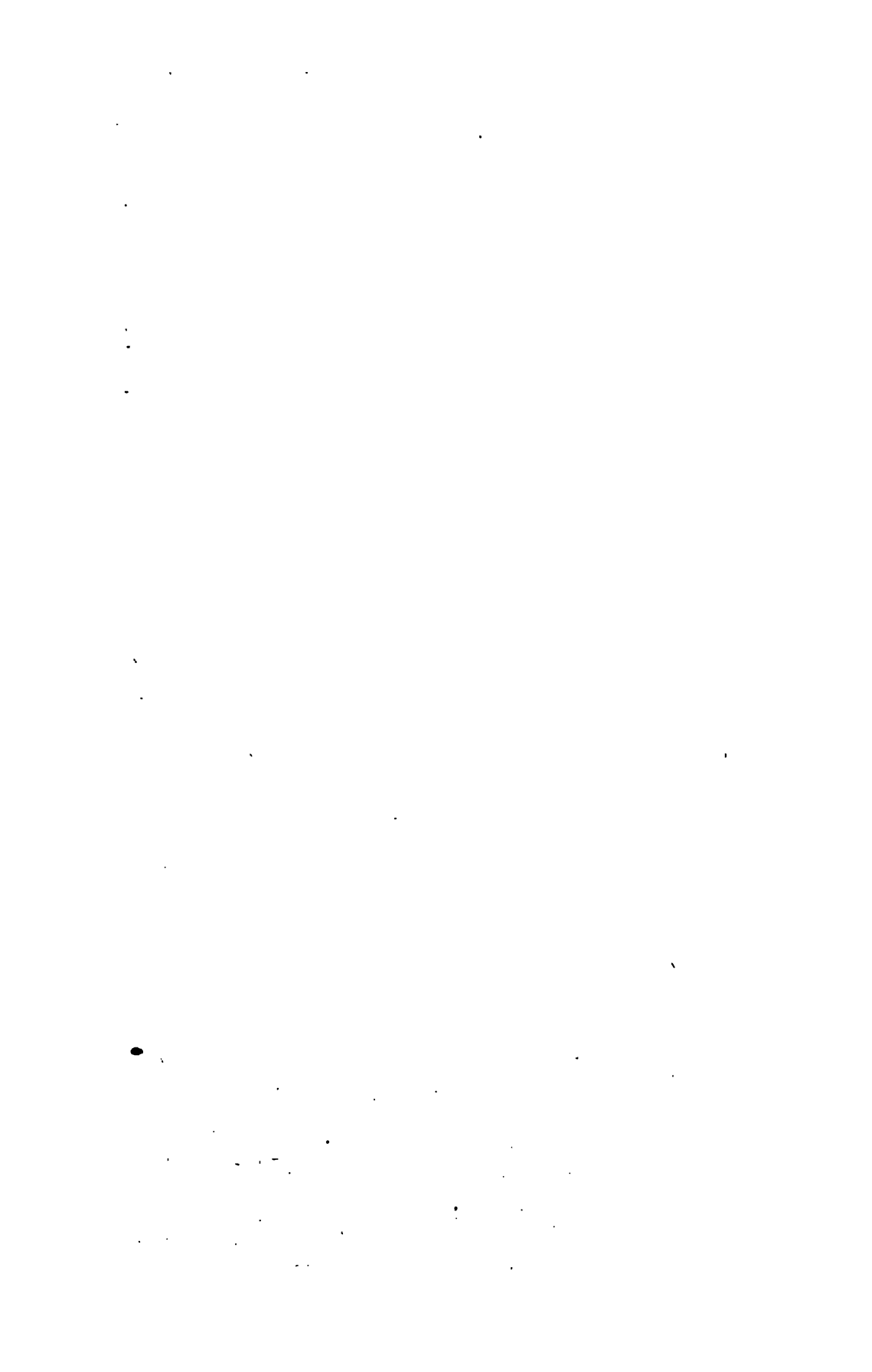
Such, therefore, was the danger and intricacy of the second operation, that if every information had been possessed with respect to the country and its defences, no well founded hope of success could have been entertained; in our actual state of doubt and ignorance, and on the supposition that the country was much stronger than it really was, no prudent man could have thought there was the smallest prospect.

The author has now brought his task to a

conclusion. He has studiously endeavoured to state facts with accuracy. If the remarks he has thought it a duty to make, should be considered harsh or even prejudicial to any individual, he intreats the candid reader to place this circumstance to the account of the facts themselves, which necessarily excited disapprobation.

Every one who reflects on the plan, conduct, and result of this unfortunate enterprise, must be impressed with sentiments of regret: for, it appears, that the plan was formed without judgment or foresight; that the conduct displayed neither prudence, skill, nor activity; and that the result was, failure in one object, and the abandonment of an important island, which might have been held at little expence against the whole force of the French empire.

FINIS.



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